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Assistant Director for Operations 27 February 1952

Chairman, Task Force

Definition of Propaganda Analysis

1. Propaganda analysis, as used in the Task Force report of 28 January 1952, is a loose term covering two principal processes:

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a. Collative compilation of propaganda items permitting the drawing of spot inferences which may be useful as intelligence information or for counter-propaganda but do not constitute valid generalizations about a propaganda program as a whole.

> Example: Five USSR regional radio stations critize deficiencies in the winter care and feeding of livestock, indicating that the fall campaign for provision against stock losses was not wholly successful.

b. Systematic content analysis, which uses a representative sample and quantitative techniques to describe a propaganda program in terms of its elements, much as a chemist might analyze a sample of an unknown compound.

2. Content analysis for intelligence purposes, to be at all economical, must know what it is looking for, rather than describe at random. With respect to Soviet orbit propaganda it is looking for two different kinds of things, one on behalf of psychological warfare and one on behalf of estimates of political strategy and intent. The ultimate objectives in both are inferential, the analysis proper contributing only the basic data for inferences. Objectives in both groups, somewhat simplified, may be ranged in ascending order of inference as follows:

Psywar	Estimates
a. What subjects and themes are stressed in Communist propaganda, what avoided? What inconsistencies are there?	a. What is the relative intensity of various preparatory elements in Communist propaganda?
b. What does the Communist want the audience to think? What is he afraid it might think? What points does he consider sore ones or safe ones?	b. For what situations or actions is current Communist propaganda the right kind of psychological preparation?

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e. What does the audience think? What could it be persuaded to think? What are the sensitive and the stable factors in its morale? How effective is Communist propaganda?

c. What do the Communists intend to do? What do they expect us, or neutrals, to do?

d. What should our paywar program be?

d. What should our political program be?

3. The answers to questions c and d above must be based on broader information than that available from propaganda analysis. Theoretically, content analysis could confine itself to answering questions a if the subjects, themes, and preparatory elements which it should analyze for were specified. Actually, it requires an intimacy with Communist propaganda to specify them, and in practice the analyst deduces them from hypothetical answers to questions b; the results of his analysis will then confirm or disprove these hypothetical answers.

> Example: Does the Communist consider the restrictions on civil liberties in the USSR a sore point with his audience? If so, he is likely to make much of infringements of civil liberties elsewhere, especially in the United States. Analytic data shows disproportionate emphasis in Communist propaganda on material of this sort, substantiating the hypothesis that he does consider civil liberties a sore point.

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4. [redacted] has won the approval of consumer offices for conducting its content analysis in terms of objectives b as well as a. In so doing, it has eliminated much waste motion and sharpened its product. A new operation has to do a good deal of blind analysis while getting oriented, but it should work toward setting up, with guidance from consumers, hypothetical answers to questions b and concentrating its analysis on verifying them.

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